

AMERICA Works Act of 2013

Senators Hagan, Heller, and Donnelly

PURPOSE

To encourage priority consideration for federal job training and career education programs that offer an industry-recognized and nationally portable credential.

SUMMARY

The AMERICA Works Act:

- Amends the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, and Workforce Investment Act to encourage federal job training programs to give priority consideration to programs that offer portable, national and industry-recognized credentials.
- No cost; the legislation would fall under existing program funding.

POLICY RATIONALE

Getting Americans back to work continues to be a top priority. Recent data show manufacturing companies cannot fill as many as 600,000 skilled positions, even as unemployment numbers remain high. For our economy to truly recover, we need collaboration and communication among all levels of government, and among community, academic and business leaders.

The AMERICA Works Act cuts to the core of the job training and skills gap issue. The bill encourages our nation's job training programs to match the skills of workers with the needs of employers by providing industry-recognized credentialing programs.

Workers that earn an industry-recognized credential would have the peace of mind knowing that their credential would make them outstanding applicants for industry jobs in any state across the country. Employers would benefit from knowing that workers are qualified for the job from the start.

According to the study "Boiling Point? The Skills Gap in U.S. Manufacturing," released by the Manufacturing Institute and Deloitte, 67 percent of manufacturers have a moderate to severe shortage of available and qualified workers.

The AMERICA Works Act aims to reduce the skills gap by building a strong workforce nationwide, setting our country on the right path to be more competitive in the global economy.

SUPPORTERS

The AMERICA Works Act is supported by: the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the American Association of Community Colleges and more than 150 businesses, educational institutions and trade associations.